GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1145
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2016
Agricultural Profession
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has evaluated the number of persons/families dependent on and involved in agricultural activities in the country and if so, the details and the outcome thereof, State-wise;

(b) whether the farmers in the country are diverting from agriculture to other source of income as farm income is very low in comparison to that of the industrial and service sector and if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken by Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has fixed any target/paid attention to create employment opportunities and enhance income of persons engaged in agriculture sector in coming year in the country, and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to achieve the said targets;

(d) the details of schemes launched/proposed to be launched for increasing employment opportunities and farm income in agriculture sector along with the funds alocated, disbursed and spent for the promotion and benefit of agriculture sector and farmers during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government has conducted any study on the regions which are facing agrarian crisis in the country and if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
and

(f) whether the Government proposes to promote agro-technology and scientific farm practices to make farming a profitable activity and to sustain growth of agriculture
to solve the agrarian crisis in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): As per Census 2011, conducted by the Registrar General of India, there are about 234 million agricultural workers in the country, comprising of 127.3 million cultivators and 106.8 million agricultural labourers. Thus, 54.6 per cent of the total workers are engaged in agricultural activities in 2011. State/UT-wise details of agricultural workers in India are given in Annexure-I.
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(b): The total number of agricultural workers in the country as per Census 2011 have increased from 234.1 million (127.3 million cultivators and 106.8 million agricultural labourers) in 2001 to 263.1 million (118.8 million cultivators and 144.3 million agricultural labourers) in 2011.

(c) & (d): Agriculture is a state subject, and primary responsibility of the state government. Union Government supplements the efforts of the state governments to increase the production and productivity of the agriculture sector. The Government has taken several steps to increase the viability of the sector which, inter-alia, include improvement in irrigation practices, better farm management, investment in rural infrastructure, timely delivery of credit, comprehensive crop insurance package, improvement in marketing infrastructure, and progressive increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP).

State-wise details of funds allocated and released on major schemes in the agricultural sector are given in Annexure-II.

(e): A Study conducted on "Evaluation of Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Package for Suicide Prone Districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra" in 2010, revealed that farmers in the beneficiary areas have availed one or the other component of the rehabilitation scheme. Specific impact was noted in the areas of supply of subsidized and certified farm inputs of irrigation, drip irrigation sets, seeds, milch animals and waiver of interest on loans and rescheduling of agricultural loans.

Another study on "Market Imperfections and Farmers Distress in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Punjab" in 2003

revealed that major causes of farmers distress in all these states were various market imperfection in agriculture which led to loss of agricultural income due to crop failure and price crashes, heavy indebtedness, commercialization of crops, failure of wells and bore wells, high costs of cultivation due to soil degradation and depletion of ground water.

(f): In order to promote agro-technology and scientific farm practices in the country, the institution of Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) has been strengthened by the Government.

Under the Sub-Mission on Agriculture Extension (SAME), under National Mission on Agriculture Extension and Technology (NMAET) launched during the Twelfth Five Year Plan, timely information and appropriate technologies are disseminated to the farmers through ATMA and Block Technology Teams.